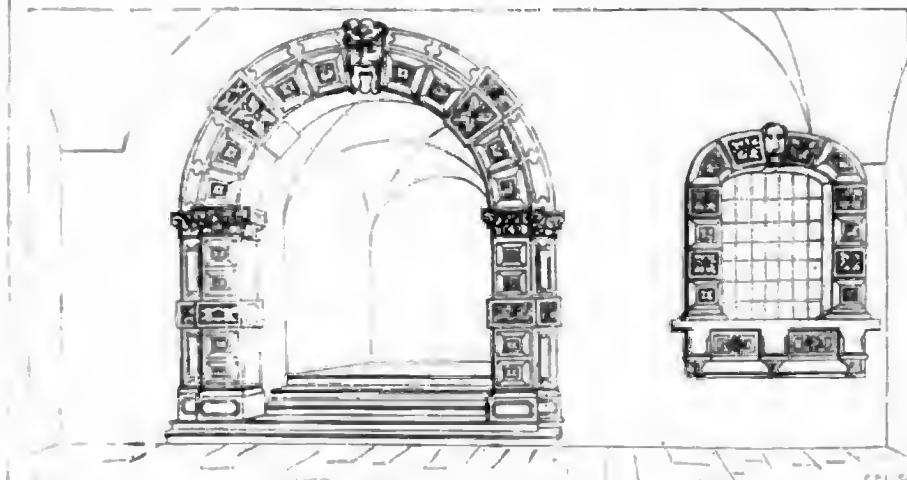


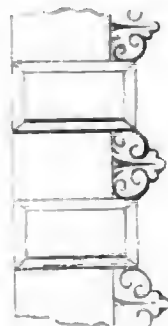
ARCHITECTURE OF CATANIA.



ENTRANCE TO UNIVERSITY.



LOWER MEMBER OF A CORNICE.



QUOIN.

UNIVERSITY, CATANIA.

THIS sketch will serve to give some slight idea of the general architecture of Catania, the style whereof is peculiar and very striking. The peculiarity consists chiefly in the extraordinary richness of the details. The doors, windows, and cornices are all lavishly adorned: and even the poorest houses partake of the ornament. It is, however, seldom carried so high as the main cornice, which is usually too weak in effect for the richness of the lower parts of the façades. The annexed sketch is from the entrance court of the University, a building which is said to have suffered greatly during the late warfare. A few memoranda, showing other specimens of the style, are subjoined. T. H. L.

HEALTHY HOMES.

UNDER this title we are glad to see a cheap issue of Professor Hosking's "Guide to the proper Regulation of Buildings, Streets, Drains, and Sewers." The original title sounded too technical, and did not convey the fact to the public that the book treated of matters in which all were vitally interested, and that they were set forth in a manner which all could understand. We gave our hearty commendation to the book in its original shape, and we hope the new issue will be extensively read, as we are satisfied it is calculated to do much good.

In a postscript to the work, Mr. Hosking had warned the Commissioners of Sewers in strong language against attempting to remove the deposits in the sewers "with a plague marching upon us with steady pace in the midst of a mild and damp winter," and in the advertisement to the new issue he points to the course of events since its first publication as justifying the warning he gave.

A large portion of the book is devoted to the subject of drainage and ventilation, and it contains many valuable suggestions with a view to render our dwelling-houses more secure against fire than they now are.

We give an extract from the appendix touching *bell-traps*, which are usually so ill-regulated in houses as to prove a source of constant annoyance and danger:—

"Bell-traps are commonly left loose, because many substances which pass through the grating or strainer of the trap refuse to pass the trap, either floating so that they cannot go under the lip of the bell, or sinking in the well so that they do not get over the standing end of the drain pipe; and as tea leaves, rice, and other matters arising from the washing of plates and dishes, the unravelled threads of house cloths, hair from brooms, and many other such like matters, find their way to the grating in the sink, or at the drain head, and, enough of

them pass through and lodge in the well into which the bell is dipped, the escape becomes choked, and the trap requires to be lifted to clear the way. To solder down bell-traps is, therefore to render the sink useless, unless they are protected from access of such obstructions, or means be devised of clearing them away. They may be protected by a wire strainer over the sink to stop everything that can tend to choke a bell-trap before it can reach the grating;—or any ordinary obstruction may be cleared by forcing all such matters as will pass the grating of a bell-trap to go under the lip of the bell, and to rise over the end of the stand-pipe, and so pass away into the drain, and the requisite force may be obtained from a slight head of water by means of a very simple apparatus that may be always at hand in every house:—A tin or other cheap metal tube of three or four feet in length, funnel-shaped at each end, and the edges formed or bound with caoutchouc, so that when stood on end and pressed firmly down there may be a water-tight joint. This instrument placed over the grating of any bell-trap so as to embrace it fully, and filled with water, the pressure will be sufficient to clear away any ordinary obstruction from the trap, and render it unnecessary to leave the trap loose. Such an apparatus may be applied by any maid-servant, and to any sink in or about a house, wherever, it must be added, there is clear height enough for it to be placed upright, though it is capable of being articulated to bend in some slight degree; and it may be made telescope fashion to give the means of increasing the pressure if need be."

AWARDS OF OFFICIAL REFEREES.

DUTIES OF DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

THE district surveyor of Wandsworth and Tooting (Mr. Hiscocke), gave notice at the end of last year to Mr. W. Josiah Smith, addressed "To the owners or occupiers of the house and premises, situate at Garratt," to "repair the brickwork of the chimney shafts, refix the pots, make good and secure the tiling or slates of the roofs, repair the gutters and shoots, and do such other repairs to the front and side walls of the said buildings and premises, as may be required pursuant to the said Act," and then in January last sent in a demand for *sl.*, "for surveying the repairs of houses at Garratt, under section 43, and causing the rules of the Act to be observed."

Mr. Smith refused to pay: the surveyor threatened to summon him: and Mr. S. therefore sent the papers to the referees to inquire into the matter, and he set forth that the only repair necessary was the pointing of the roofs, which was always done once a year. The referees accordingly surveyed the buildings, which it appeared were ten in number, and determined (July last) that none of the things stated in the notice were, at the date of the notice, in danger of falling within the meaning of the

43rd section, and being of opinion thereupon that there was no sufficient ground for the proceeding taken in the matter by the district surveyor, awarded "that the said district surveyor is not entitled to be paid by, or to receive from, the said William Josiah Smith, any fee in respect of the proceeding hereinbefore referred to."

"And further, we do hereby declare our opinion as to such proceeding, if it had been a necessary one in the case, that inasmuch as the said district surveyor does not in the said notice specifically set forth for, and as to each of the said several buildings, the particular matters or things which in each of the said several buildings be deemed and alleged to be in danger of falling, the said notice is not a sufficient requirement or notice, under the 43rd section of the said Act first herein mentioned, to the several occupiers or owners of the said buildings," and further that the account, as it did not state "the number of such houses, or the amount claimed in respect of each of the said houses, or which of the several fees specified in schedule L is claimed," was not such an account as the district surveyor is required to give. Cost to be paid by the district surveyor.

BACK-YARDS.

With regard to four fourth-rate dwelling-houses in Hatfield-street, Goswell-street, in the district of St. Luke's, Old-street, and the liberty of Glasshouse-yard, the surveyor of the district (Mr. Carpenter) laid an information before the official referees. Messrs. Davey, builders, had "formed the back-yards so as to contain less than one square each, exclusive of any building thereon." The yards measured respectively 12 feet 1 inch by 8 feet 2 inches = 98 feet 8 inches; 12 feet 2 inches by 7 feet 9 inches = 94 feet 3 inches; 11 feet 11 inches by 7 feet 4 inches = 87 feet 4 inches; and 11 feet 10½ inches by 7 feet 0 inches = 83 feet 6 inches.

At the hearing it was stated, "that there had formerly been buildings on the site occupied by the present buildings; that such buildings had been pulled down from thirteen to fifteen years ago; and that the present buildings contain three stories only, and that the lowest story is not an underground or basement story; and the said district-surveyor stated that, as regarded the line of street, he had recognized the erection of the said buildings as the rebuilding of previously existing buildings."

The referees determined, "That inasmuch as the buildings which formerly stood upon the site of the said four buildings were pulled down and removed before the time when the said Act first herein mentioned came into operation, the erection of the said four buildings does not constitute a rebuilding of buildings already built within the meaning of Schedule K of the said Act; and that the said buildings are buildings hereafter built within the meaning of the said schedule; and that inasmuch as each of the said buildings has been built without having an enclosed back-yard or